NEWS AND COMMENT IN THE WORLD OF ART

The Crucifixion tapestry now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

THE Department of Education announces that examinations for teachers' licenses of free hand drawing in high schools will be conducted by the board of examiners at the hall of the Board of Education, Park avenue and Fifty-ninth street, Manhattan, on Monday and Tuesday, September 18 and 19, 1916, beginning at 9 A. M.

The high schools employ over a hundred teachers of drawing, and there are now a number of vacancies. Candidates who receive good ratings upon the examination may expect early appointments to well paid positions. Both men and women are eligible for the examinations. The minimum salary of an assistant teacher of drawing is $900 per annum; the maximum is $2,650. Credits are given for previous experience to permit an assistant teacher to begin service at a salary from one to eight years in advance of the minimum. No one is eligible for a license for service in the high schools of New York city who is not over 21 and less than 41 years of age, except that in the case of an applicant who holds a permanent license granted for the public schools the maximum limit of age shall be the fifty-first birthday.

All persons desiring information respecting the matter should communicate with the board of examiners, 500 Park avenue, New York city.

The latest issue of the bulletin of the Detroit Museum of Art announces a loan of twenty-five pieces of pottery executed by Mary Chase Perry, maker of the Pewabic ware. This ware has been described by Charles L. Freer as being as fine as any modern pottery produced. Its qualities of form and glaze are in the highest degree distinguished, but it is known only to a limited extent in New York.

The bulletin also contains a reproduction of a recent self-portrait by William M. Chase, which the artist presented to the museum as the beginning of a collection of self-portaits by artists similar to that in the Uffizi Gallery. The standard will be maintained by having future contributions referred to those whose portraits are in the collection, those contributing constituting themselves a jury to suggest others who shall be invited.

The acquisition of the famous Wertheimer paintings by the National Gallery in London has been the source of great satsifaction to those admirers of the art of John Sargent who are anxious to see it represented in the fullest degree in England's national shrine. The *Times* says:

"We are able to announce that Asher Wertheimer's unrivalled collection of family portraits by John S. Sargent, R. A., eventually will become the property of the nation and that they will find a permanent home in the National Gallery, where, it may be hoped, a special room will be provided for them in due course.

"Lord D'Abernon and other members of the board of trustees recently have been in communication with Mr. Wertheimer and have viewed the pictures, and it is almost unnecessary to say that this magnificent gift has been as gratefully acknowledged by the trustees as it will be by the public at large. Mr. and Mrs. Wertheimer will enjoy the possession of the pictures during their lifetime, and after that they will automatically pass to the keeping of the nation. There are, we believe, no other restrictions.

"Gifts and bequests to public galleries and museums have taken all sorts of forms, but that which we announce to-day is quite distinct. One thinks of the Medici portraits in the Uffizi at Florence, of the Tradescant family portraits in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, but neither these nor others that might be mentioned are comparable with the Wertheimer Sargents. There are nine pictures in all, single figures and groups, of Mr. and Mrs. Wertheimer and their family. They range in date from 1898 to 1904, and thus cover the most characteristic period of our greatest living portrait painter. Nearly all have from time to time been exhibited at the Royal Academy and elsewhere, and most of them are familiar to the public from the numerous reproductions which have appeared in the various illustrated magazines, more particularly in the *Art Journal* of January, 1911, in which this remarkable series of portraits was considered at length by Robert Ross, and where seven of the nine were reproduced—the ninth being the unfinished portrait of the late Edward Wertheimer.

"The first of the series is that of Asher Wertheimer himself. This was in the 1898 Academy and has been described as 'one of the great portraits of the world—the only modern picture which challenges the Doria Velasquez at Rome, "Innocent X."' The noble portrait of Mrs. Wertheimer in a black dress, painted six years later than that of her husband, is full of a quiet, refined beauty and a melancholy charm which Mr. Sargent never has excelled. There was an earlier portrait of Mrs. Wertheimer, painted and exhibited also in 1898, to celebrate their silver wedding, but that portrait was not one of the artist's successes and is not included in the group which will one day pass into the National Gallery. The second in point of date, the 'Daughters of Asher Wertheimer, Esq.,' was in the Royal Academy, of 1901, and probably has been more frequently reproduced than any of the others. It is a group of two nearly whole length pictures of the Misses Betty and Ena Wertheimer (now Mrs. Euston A. Salaman and Mrs. Robert M. Mathias), respectively in dark and light dresses; this was one of the most discussed pictures of the year and is, perhaps, the richest in color of the whole series.

"A pathetic interest is attached to the three-quarter length of Alfred Wertheimer, who died in South Africa at the early age of 25 years, leaving unfilled the promise of a brilliant career as a scientist—a study indicated by the two retorts shown on the wall. This was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1902. A similar note of pathos is attached to the unfinished portrait of another son, Edward Wertheimer, which was sketched in Paris in 1902, the year of his untimely death. In this year Mr. Sargent painted another group of Mr. Wertheimer's children—Ruby, Essie (now Mrs. Wilding) and Ferdinand. The last named, after being graduated by Balliol College, joined the army and is now on active service abroad. This fine group was exhibited at the New Gallery in 1902. Three others of Mr. Wertheimer's children are represented in another group of about the same size—Conway, Alna (now Mrs. Fachiri) and Hylda (now Mrs. H. Wilson Young); while of the two last named there are also separate portraits, that of Hylda Wertheimer being a whole length and that of Miss Alna Wertheimer a three-quarter length seated, dressed in a Persian costume, with a lute.

"The year 1916 will, in art, rank as a Sargent year. Within the last few months Lord Ribblesdale has presented to the National Gallery the well known whole length of himself, and Mrs. Bywater the portrait of her late husband, Professor Ingram Bywater. An important loan exhibition of his works has opened at Boston, Mass., in May last, and now we have the munificent bequest of Mrs. Wertheimer."

In the tapestry from the Morgan collection recently acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art there is the unique quality of being the oldest specimen of French tapestry known. In his book "Les Tapisseries du 12th a la fin du 16th siecle" Guiffrey has illustrated and called especial attention to this piece as the sole product left to us of the French looms before the middle of the fourteenth century. One can point only to the several priceless thirteenth century tapestries preserved in the German cathedrals of Halberstadt and Quedlingburg as pieces of earlier date and, as such, unique examples of Romanesque loom technique.

But while the German cathedrals have been fortunate in keeping their treasures very largely intact, their French neighbors were pillaged during the long series of religious wars. As a result, this seems to be the sole example which bridges the gap between these Romanesque pieces and the rare and precious products of French art which are still preserved from the fourteenth century, when the looms of Arras were first approaching the height of their popularity and excellence.

Certainly when one compares this piece with the series of the Apocalypse belonging to the Cathedral of Angers, which dates about the second half of the fourteenth century, one cannot but be struck by the greater antiquity of the Museum example. Not only are the types different, but the simplicity of figures and of draperies points to an origin that cannot be far distant from the end of the thirteenth century.

The figures are in the grand style of Gothic art at the period when all the minor workmen—ivory workers, miniaturists, and as we see now in this tapestry, the tapestry weavers—were profoundly influenced by the extraordinary efflorescence of sculpture and architecture which marked the height of the Gothic development. There is as yet none of the worldliness of type which we find in work of the fourteenth century. The "Vierge Dorée" of Amiens, dating about 1288, gave impetus to a more realistic treatment, differing from the idealism so characteristic of thirteenth century art. But while this movement developed among the sculptors in the later years of the century it was probably not at once that the minor craftsmen adopted the new types, so that the attribution of this piece to the last years of the thirteenth century, or about 1300, is perhaps just—although the figures show some of the characteristics which in sculpture might point to an earlier date. They show the slight swaying of the hips which marked the development from the earlier, more monumental type, but the flexion is slight as yet, and the expressions are of so deep a seriousness that a later date seems impossible.

In technique, as well as in design, this piece shows the characteristics of the earliest types of tapestry weaving. There are only about ten colors used, yet a result is obtained which the tapestry workers of later times could not equal. It is art rising over its restrictions. The figures stand out abruptly from the dark blue background, some with stars, while the flat and simple tones of the draperies achieve an effect of nuance and subtlety with a minimum of means. It will be noticed that the outlines not only of the figures but of the draperies as well are indicated by the black outline which was practically conventional among the early weavers; while the features, faintly indicated by black lines, have been accentuated by an additional couched thread added afterward.

It is a traditional and symbolic representation of the Crucifixion, with the figure of Our Lord upon the cross, His body bleeding at every pore from the wounds of the flagellation, the blood streaming from His hands and side, while above is the customary inscription, I. N. R. I.—"Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judæorum." On either side are the figures of the Virgin Mary and Saint John the Evangelist. The figure of the Virgin at the left is strangely appealing, her hands clasped in an agony of grief, while the figure of Saint John is the usual youthful type, carrying a book in his right hand. On either side of these figures are two crowned female saints, of the type of royal or princely saints or martyrs, which, according to the mediæval convention, were so often represented as present in spirit at the crucifixion scene. Beside the Virgin is Saint Catherine of Alexandria, bearing the palm and the wheel, the symbols of her martyrdom. The identification of the figure to the right is somewhat open to question, but it seems probable that it is a representation of Saint Margaret of Antioch. Her proper emblem is always a cross, and the flames at her feet may represent the fiery breath of the dragon that she subdued, according to the legend.

S. C. Bosch Reitz, the latest curator to be added to the staff of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, is an expert in the arts of the Far East. Several Near Eastern ceramics have been added to the collection, and they now are on view in the Room of Recent Accessions. Mr. Reitz writes entertainingly of them in the latest issue of the *Bulletin*. Of chief importance in these Eastern exhibits is a Persian bowl from Rhages dating from the eleventh century.

"Systematic excavations recently have shown evidences of a brilliant civilization extending for many centuries anterior to its destruction, and the Museum is fortunate in acquiring an example which shows Rhages ceramic art at the height of this development, and which ranks with the finest pieces in any public or private collection. The bowl is characteristic of one type of Rhages work which up to the present time has not been represented so excellently in our collection. Beautifully and thinly potted, the design in brown lustre is painted upon a white slip which is entirely covered with a thin transparent glaze. In design the bowl is thought to be unique in Persian ceramic art as no other representation of the winged horse has at yet been brought to light. The piece is unusual as well in fineness of drawing and the extent China gave France its Louis XV. style or rococo, but it was the outcome, the decline of a far greater and nobler art.

"On the other hand, the oldest known Chinese art was equally quaint, though in a different way, based on the art of their prehistoric people, and very like what is still the style of decoration in the South Sea Islands. It is the style of Chou bronzes with grotesque masks of animals and conventional, heavy forms. Being an eminently conservative people and antiquarians to the backbone the Chinese stuck to their ancient ornaments just as they treasured and reproduced their ancient bronzes.

"But these were only the beginning and the end; in between lay the golden age, the classic period of Chinese art when they produced sculpture like our Gothic figures and paintings that rival those of the Italian pre-Raphaelites. Unfortunately that is the art about which we know the least. It started with the Han in our Roman times, was at its best during the T'ang period from 618 to 906, and lived through the Sung period. Short lived it was, perhaps, but in 1,000 years great works were done, so fine that all the historians have tried to explain the classic Greek or Roman influence.

"I got myself disliked once by comparing a T'ang pottery horse's head to the famous heads of the Parthenon, but there was some truth in the heresy. For this reason I am glad that the Museum acquired the T'ang vessel reproduced here; it is of the simplest, purest form, perfectly unadorned except for the openwork foot and the collar of the cover, which acts like a foot when the cover is used as a cup. These are formed by a complicated pattern of intertwined snakes, charmingly designed and wonderfully cast, a kind of goldsmith's work that will be the joy of many art workers; at the same time the elaborate pattern is kept so simple that it does not detract in the least from the general classic simplicity of the piece. That time has spread a lovely patina over the whole certainly adds to the charm, but it was not needed; even when perfectly new and shining this sacrificial vessel must have been a joy to the man of taste."

J. Alden Weir's "The Old Sentinels of the Farm," in the summer show at the Knoedler Gallery.

Eliot Clark has just written and Frederic Fairchild Sherman published a brief and highly interesting life of Alexander Wyant. The painter, born on January 11, 1836, in Evans's Creek, Ohio, passed his life in the simplest surroundings. He was taken to Defiance, Ohio, when a child and there he was sent to the village school. His desire to express himself in pictorial form must have been spontaneous, since there was in his surroundings no impulse to an artistic life.

So in his earliest youth it is said that, lying before the fire, he would endeavor to describe in charcoal his childish fancies. It was naturally not congenial to him to be apprenticed to a harness maker. But the unsympathetic employment did not chill his ardor to become an artist. A visit to Cincinnati in 1857 in which he was able to see a collection of paintings by George Inness had a strong influence in determining him to devote himself to the art of painting.

Then he determined to visit the artist in New York and ask his advice. The encouragement given him by Inness and the opportunity to see other pictures in the metropolitan galleries settled his determination to continue his work as a painter. Nicholas Longworth gave him the necessary assistance and he was enabled to return to New York. He was first represented in the exposition of 1864 and one year later sailed for Germany to continue his studies there.

The Dusseldorf school having found favor in America, in 1863 a large collection of works by these painters was brought to New York. In this exhibition there was a typical canvas by Hans Gude, and it was probably that picture which incited Wyant to seek this master for instruction. His stay with Gude at Carlsruhe was pleasant, but the artistic influence could not have been altogether sympathetic. Wyant was seeking a more personal form of expression, and his study under Gude was not long continued. He made a short visit to England and Ireland, after which he returned to America.

In 1868 Wyant was elected an associate of the National Academy, and the following year a full member, on his picture of "The Upper Susquehanna." Notwithstanding this gratifying appreciation of his work, the material trials of maintenance were severe. In 1873 he joined a Government expedition bound for Arizona and New Mexico. He suffered many hardships. The exposure, fatigue and lack of proper food proved too much for his feeble constitution, and he returned to the East. His illness resulted in a stroke of paralysis of the right side. From this date Wyant was obliged to paint with his left hand.

In 1880 Wyant married Arabella Locke, who had been one of his pupils. Their summers were spent in Keene Valley in the Adirondacks, and later in 1889, they moved to Arkville in the Catskills. The house was on the mountain slope opposite the town. A small piazza was built on the west end of the house and from here the painter could survey the surrounding country, looking up the valley of the Delaware and into the nearby woods. In the later years this was the limit of his pictorial material. Apart from occasional drives he seldom ventured far from this immediate vicinity. This, however, seemed entirely satisfying. He would sit with unwearied interest watching the clouds and the different lights and colors that passed over the landscape. Then he would retire to his studio and transfer his impressions to canvas. He suffered much from bodily pain, and physical exertion became more and more difficult. He was incapacitated for the occupations and enjoyments of a normal life. This drew him more and more to his work. This was his great passion, his unceasing desire until the end. He died November 29, 1892.

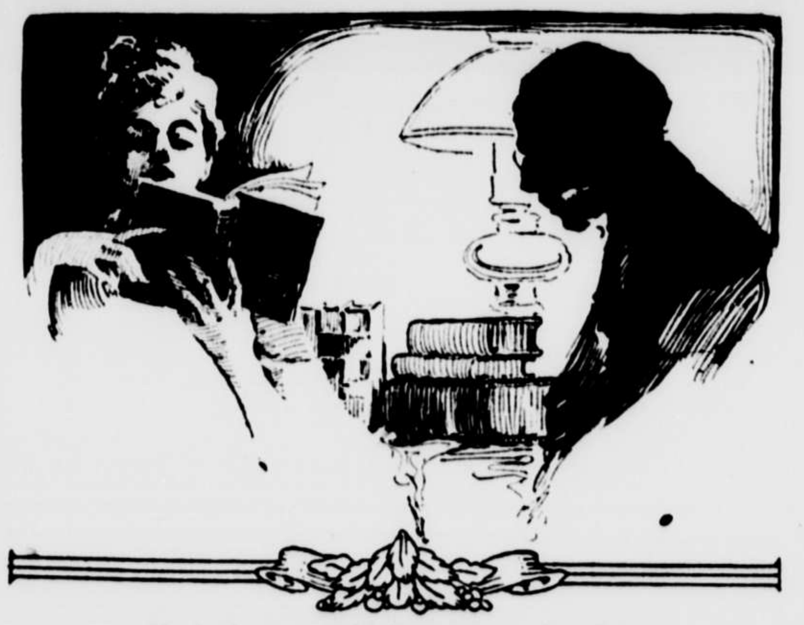
In his comparison of the two American painters Mr. Clark says:

"Wyant used nature. He took from her only what he needed. His study was not only objective. He was constantly searching for rhythm, balance and harmony. While walking with a friend in the country the silence was broken when Wyant said: 'How do you like that line of distant mountains?' 'Just what do you mean, Mr. Wyant?' 'Well,' said he, 'don't you think it would be finer if the line came down just a little lower where it meets the nearer plane?' He was thinking in terms of abstract harmony, and when he was out of doors he was always thinking. One day when he was leaning against a fence an artist friend going out to work said: 'Ah, good morning, Mr. Wyant, not working to-day?' 'Yes,' responded Wyant, 'I'm working.'

"Inness was more emotional than Wyant," says Mr. Clark. "His expression responds to the various phases of nature in calm and in storm, in sunlight and in shadow. He had a strong sense of the dramatic, which in seeking expression in visual form led to much experimenting. Each picture became a new problem. In consequence his work is more uneven than Wyant's. Homer Martin was more of a dreamer. Not comparable to Inness or Wyant as a painter, he nevertheless expresses something of the poetry of the earth that is imperishable. In Wyant, however, we find that rare combination, the ability to portray the substance and the soul, the material and the spiritual. A constant and conscientious worker, a keen and sensitive observer, he added to painting his own discoveries of truth, his own interpretation of nature. We do not look to him for powerful and dramatic representation. We do not look for new arrangements of design and color. He had not the austere solidity of his prototype Rousseau, but he breathed into his forms a more subtle, serene and illusive spirit, which we can best hint at by the word charm. Associated with the general movement of the men of 1830, he must take his place among them as one of the great landscape painters of the nineteenth century. Though not original in the sense of an innovator, Wyant was nevertheless very personal and individual. His art was not founded on formula and school precepts, not created to satisfy a popular fancy, but created out of a necessity for creation. This is the spark of genius."

Created cute little biscuits.

Wrote vers libre.



He had never told Beatrice he loved her.

Not creative.

Her only grace.

AS IT HAPPENED THEN AND NOW

He had a social conscience.

Made becoming hats.

1900.

FRANKLY, Edward wanted to marry. He could support a wife now, and he was going through the process, so full of danger for himself, so hope renewing for the other sex, of looking around. He knew from experience even when he was a struggling young lawyer that he had but to lift his heavy eyelashes and any girl he desired would fall under the spell of his frank and luminous glance. Indeed, it had been difficult for him to avoid entanglement of the affections that would naturally ensue from a warm heart, stimulating mind and exuberant personality. Now he was ready. He could take his choice.

His gray eye, roving but purposeful, fell first on Josephine. She was what is known as a fine figure of a woman. She had glossy black hair and strong white teeth. Every time Edward looked at her teeth he was on the point of proposing. But behind those perfect teeth flashed a biting tongue, for Josephine's creed was that she was as good as the men any day and her ambition was to prove it. She was always showing the men their place. She even smoked an occasional cigar with an unhappy pucker of her firm, red lips and went alone to cafes where other women did not venture without escorts.

"Not bad company," Edward admitted, "but no charm. And too clever," by which he meant that she was not clever enough to hide her cleverness.

Next was Louise. Louise was not pretty, but she had red cheeks, warm brown eyes and a large practice as a physician. She drove fast horses, took much thought of her dinner and never gossiped.

"Good old scout," he acknowledged, "but a medical wife would have drawbacks. If I came home with a cold in my head I'd have to hear about the epizooty, and I'd rather hear about a hot toddy."

Then came Clara. She was a writer of novels. She was so tall that with more assurance she would have been queenly. But she stood with bent knees so that she would not tower above the men around her, which gave her a huddled appearance. Her only grace was the grace of sympathy.

"Nice," conceded Edward, "but she'd read me Browning when I wanted breakfast."

And Agnes. Agnes was beautiful. She had a pink and white dollish face, large feet and a logical mind. As a stenographer she ran the office end of her employer's business for $50 a week. As a daughter in her father's home she created little hot biscuits that would wring a theatre ticket from any man. All the men of her acquaintance loved her as they would a sister. All their mothers wished they would marry her. And no one ever would.

"Fine girl," said Edward solemnly. "Great head for business and biscuits. Lucky devil that gets her."

But Minnie. Minnie worked in a millinery shop when she needed money or excitement. The rest of the time she stayed at home and made such becoming hats that they reflected on her character. She was a little uncertain of her diction, but never of her dress. She had small dark eyes, a large mouth and prominent teeth. She danced with perfection. She never spoke except when she was spoken to, and not then if a blush would do just as well. All the men of her acquaintance loved her, even men who knew better. For a brain low and soft and a voice not at all are excellent things in woman.

"She's not the kind of wife for me," Edward assured himself, and spent two evenings a week watching her sew. Once a week he took her to a dance and Saturday night to the theatre.

He was amazed when he discovered that Minnie was to become his wife, but happier than he had ever dreamed of being. She had grown to him extravagantly beautiful. He felt that his will could dominate any situation the day might bring if the night would bring him to her.

"I wonder when she will let me look clear down into her eyes," he thought. "I wonder what makes that light in them. I wonder why she—I wonder why I——"

The beating of his heart stopped him.

1916.

Secretly Beatrice wanted to marry. She had arrived at that stage in her career when she could afford such an intellectual distraction as a husband, and she was going through the process, so subtle for a woman, so fatal if she is detected, of looking around. She knew from experience that she had but to lift her heavy eyelashes and any man she desired would fall under the spell of her deep and luminous glance. Indeed it had been difficult for her to avoid entanglement of the affections that would naturally ensue from a warm heart, stimulating mind and exuberant personality. Now she was ready. She could take her choice.

Her black eye, wistful and inviting, fell first on Theodore. He had tight red curls and a temperament. If he did not affect flowing locks he did slap the fingers of one long hand into the palm of the other and say, with the emphasis on the second word, "I believe in art." He wrote vers libre to make a living and tender little slumber songs because he could not help it.

"No," said Beatrice, "when I come home from the office I don't want to hear that he believes in art. I'd rather hear that he believes in me. Besides, any one who writes such lovely lullabies would be sure to beat the baby."

Next was Oliver. He taught English in a woman's college. He was not creative, he explained to friends who asked him why he did not write, only appreciative. He did not explain that if editors were as appreciative as he he would now be creating instead of appreciating. He said his prayers to Swinburne and called ages æons. He took a deep interest in the workings of his soul and often referred to the present stage of his spiritual development.

"No," said Beatrice, "I don't want to sit at dinner with a soul and know that even as it eats beefsteak it meditates anxiously on the precise stage of its development. I'd rather it would meditate on the price of butter."

Then came Charles. He was a radical reformer. He did affect long hair and was very tender of it. He had a social conscience and was also tender of that.

"No," said Beatrice, "when I come home at night I'd rather see a short haired scoundrel than a long haired conscience."

And James. He was tempting. He was a budding magnate. Beatrice could see prospective railroads in each keen eye and hear a whole line of future steamboats tooting in his voice.

"He will be a very rich man," said Beatrice regretfully. Then the soft droop of her mouth lifted into a smile. "But every time I asked for a nickel he would say it had to go back into the business. I'd rather marry a poor man and have a little luxury."

But George. George was permanently a bank clerk. He came to see Beatrice almost every night. Although she worked for two hours after dinner, he arrived early for a play with little Jimmy and the dog. After Jimmy had been put to bed and the dog was recuperating in the corner he worked in the den with her father on the Great Invention. Then he spent a few minutes advising her mother about the plants in the conservatory.

When at last he was admitted into her study he methodically rearranged the wood in the grate and swept the hearth. Just as the clock struck 9 he touched a match to the kindling and to his cigar, put out the reading lamp for Beatrice and drew her easy chair into the firelight. The room was not too dark for her to see the excitement in the usually calm eyes as they dwelt on her.

Those long, steady looks thrilled her. So did the selfless interest with which he listened to her legal triumphs. So did the crisp way in which the blond hair waved up from the back of his neck. He invited her out whenever his salary would permit. This was not often, but it did not matter, for his place was obviously in the home. He had never told Beatrice that he loved her and she knew that he never would without a first assurance from her.

"Brilliant men," she said, "are bears around the house. And why is not the domestic sphere as honorable as business? What statesman could make a mission chair like the one he made—or muffins like his? How true his eyes are! And the touch of his hand! I wonder when he—I wonder when I——"

The beating of her heart stopped her.

A budding magnate.

Drove fast horses.